# News Release
# Communiqué

Ontario

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

For Immediate Release
July 30, 2007
2007/nr-162

## MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT ENSURING HIGH QUALITY NUTRITION FOR LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENTS

*Additional $23.1 Million Will Ensure High Quality Food Preparation*

TORONTO- The McGuinty government is making sure long-term care home residents are provided with high quality, diverse menu choices by increasing the daily raw food allowance to $7.00, effective September 1, 2007, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"The type of food offered to long-term care residents has a direct impact on their health and quality of life," said Smitherman. "That's why our government is further increasing funding to long-term care operators to ensure that patients are provided with an improved range of nutritional menu options."

Today's announcement means that long-term care homes will receive an additional $23.1 million in funding for raw food this year. The funding announced today is in addition to the $2.3 million increase in raw food funding received by long-term care homes on July 1, 2007 and represents a total increase of 33.6 per cent since July 2003. On average, long-term care homes spend about $18.76 daily in providing food to each resident. This includes the cost of raw food as well as preparation and staffing costs.

"This is really good news for residents", said Karen Sullivan, Executive Director of the Ontario Long Term Care Association. "The additional funding will enable homes to enhance resident meals with things like more fresh fruit and better quality meats. In addition, it will assist homes in meeting the increasingly specialized diets residents require because of their age and medical condition."

In January 2005, the government introduced a regulation to ensure that resident meal plans are reviewed and approved by a dietitian.

"We are thrilled that residents in long term care homes will benefit from this increase" says Linda Dietrich, Regional Executive Director for Dietitians of Canada. "Food and nutrition are crucial in the long-term care setting for health and quality of life, and this funding increase will help dietitians plan menus to meet those complex needs."

This is just one more example of how, working together, Ontarians have achieved results in health care services in long-term care homes. Other initiatives include:

- Increasing funding for long-term care by nearly $800 million since 2003;
- Funding 6,100 new front-line staff in long-term Care homes, including 2,300 nurses;
- Opening 7,712 new long-term care beds since October 2003;
- Enhancing the quality of life for residents of long-term care homes by passing the Long-Term Care Homes Act 2007 to strengthen enforcement and improve care.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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